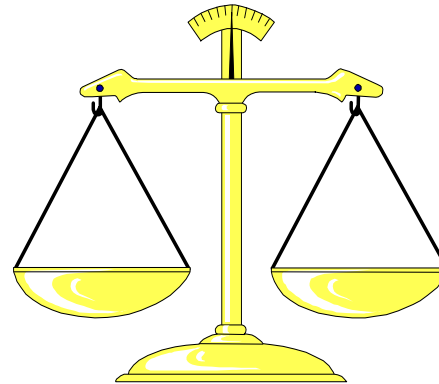


# **JUDICIAL BRANCH BUDGET REQUEST FY 2008-2009**



## A NEW BUDGET BUILDING PROCESS

- Process began with task forces & commissions that examined the services offered and public perceptions about the court system
- Public input was sought in forums throughout the state
- The recommendations contained in their reports helped us to formulate a long range plan
- Priorities were established through a group with members from the public, the NH Bar, and court staff.

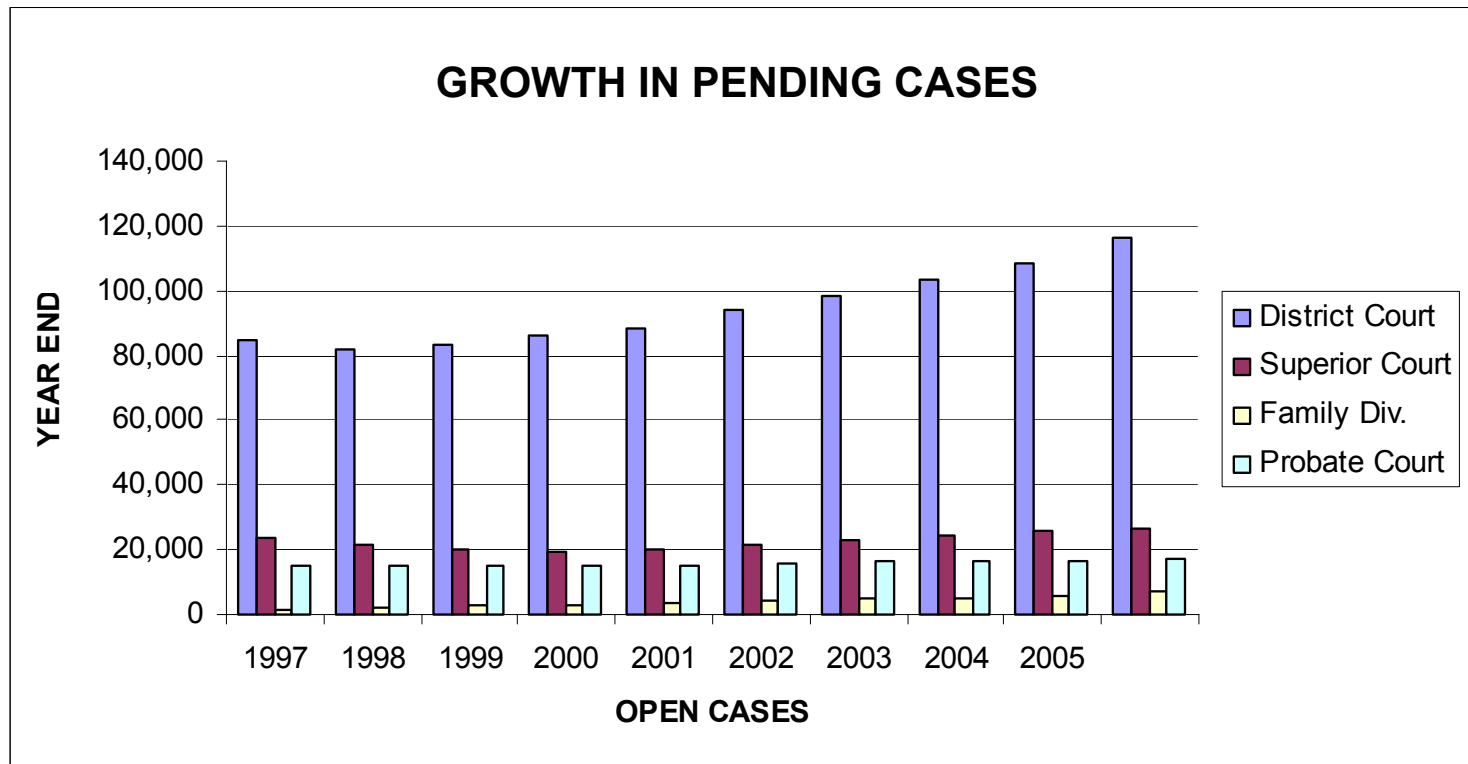
# FIVE GOALS OF THE LONG-RANGE PLAN

- Work to serve and educate the public
  - Respect and respond to multiple constituencies while working to promote understanding of and respect for the rule of law
- Achieve progress through change
  - Anticipate change and manage innovation
- Keep our courthouses safe
- Recognize our staff as our most valuable resource
  - Attract, develop and retain talented personnel
- Deliver results fairly and efficiently
  - Improve the quality of justice with an efficient and effective delivery system

## KEY ELEMENTS OF MAINTENANCE BUDGET

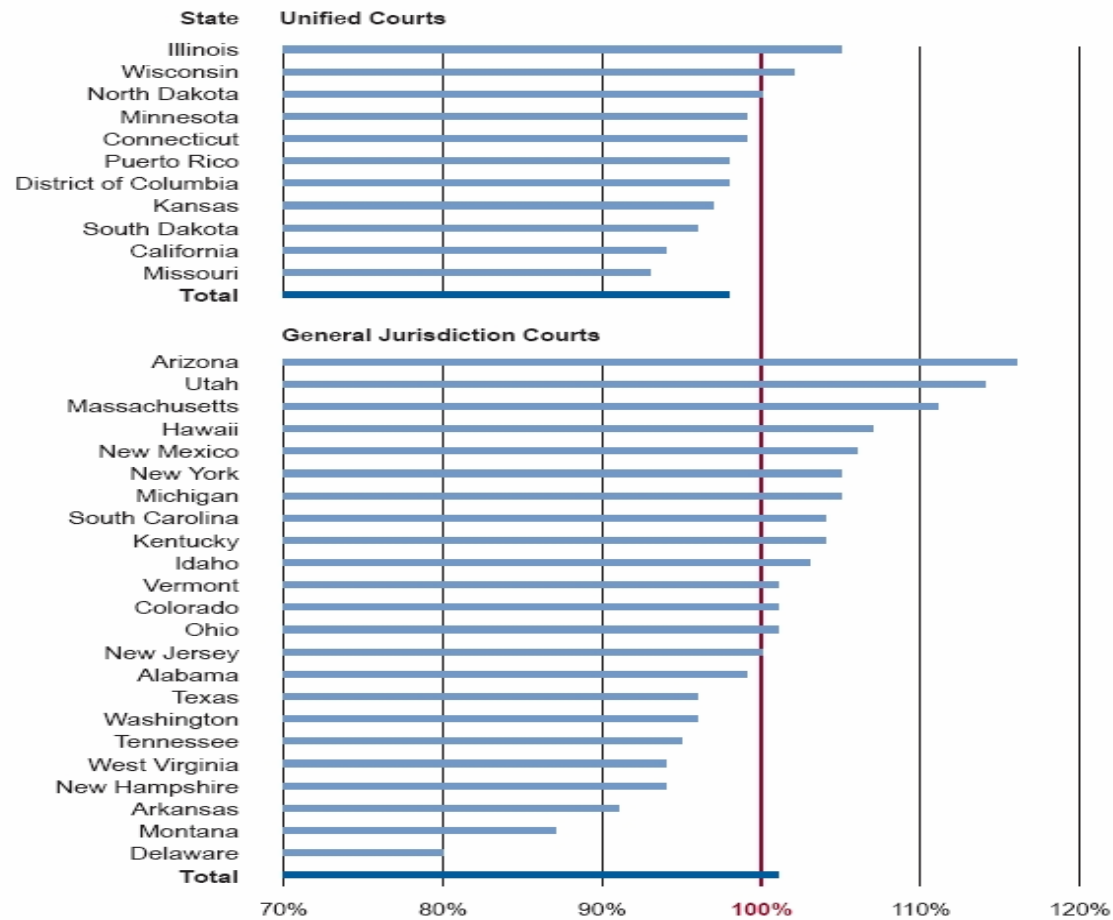
- The maintenance budget is 5% more than FY 2007, or \$3.2M.
- Benefits is the largest increase at \$1.2M.
- The cost for leases & maintenance of court facilities increased \$952K.
- Holds 25 existing positions vacant

# THE NUMBER OF PENDING CASES HAS GROWN SYSTEMWIDE



# Our clearance rates have deteriorated

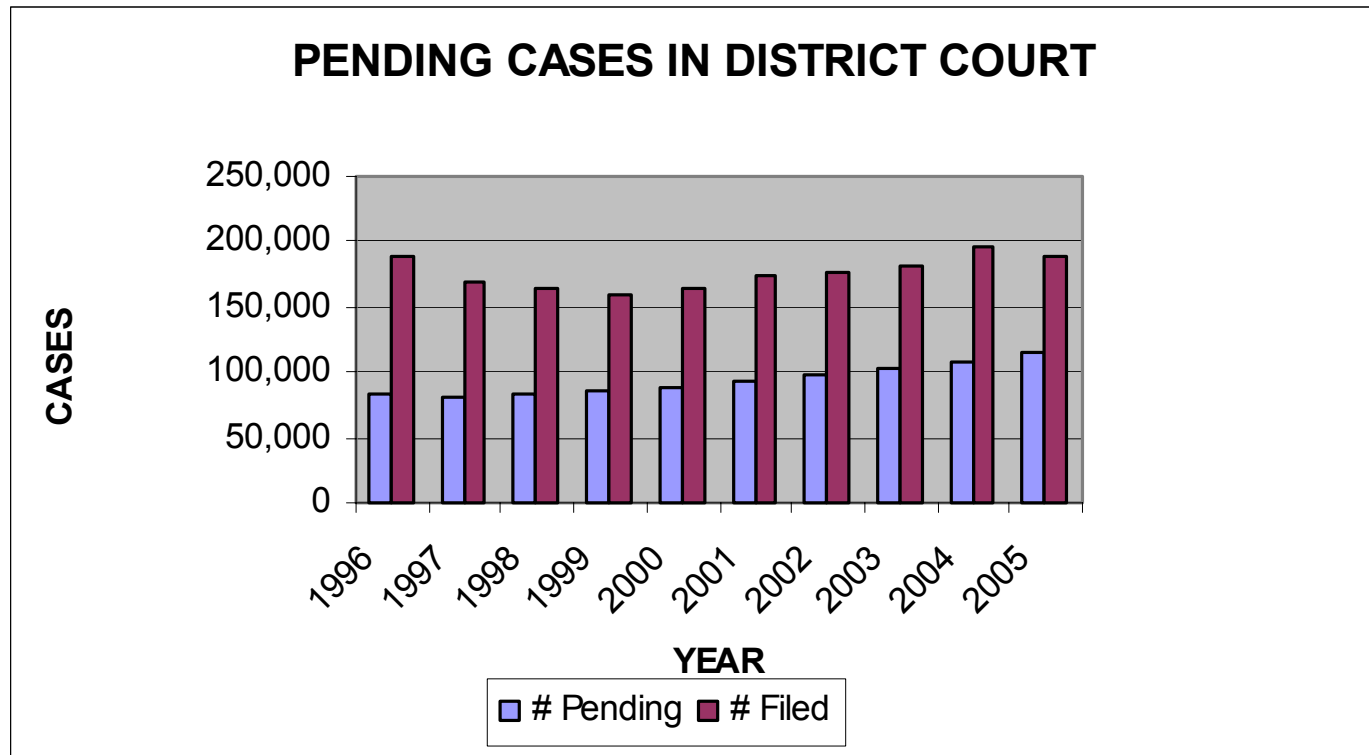
Civil Clearance Rates in Unified and General Jurisdiction Courts in 34 States, 2004



Clearance rate is the ratio of cases disposed to cases filed.

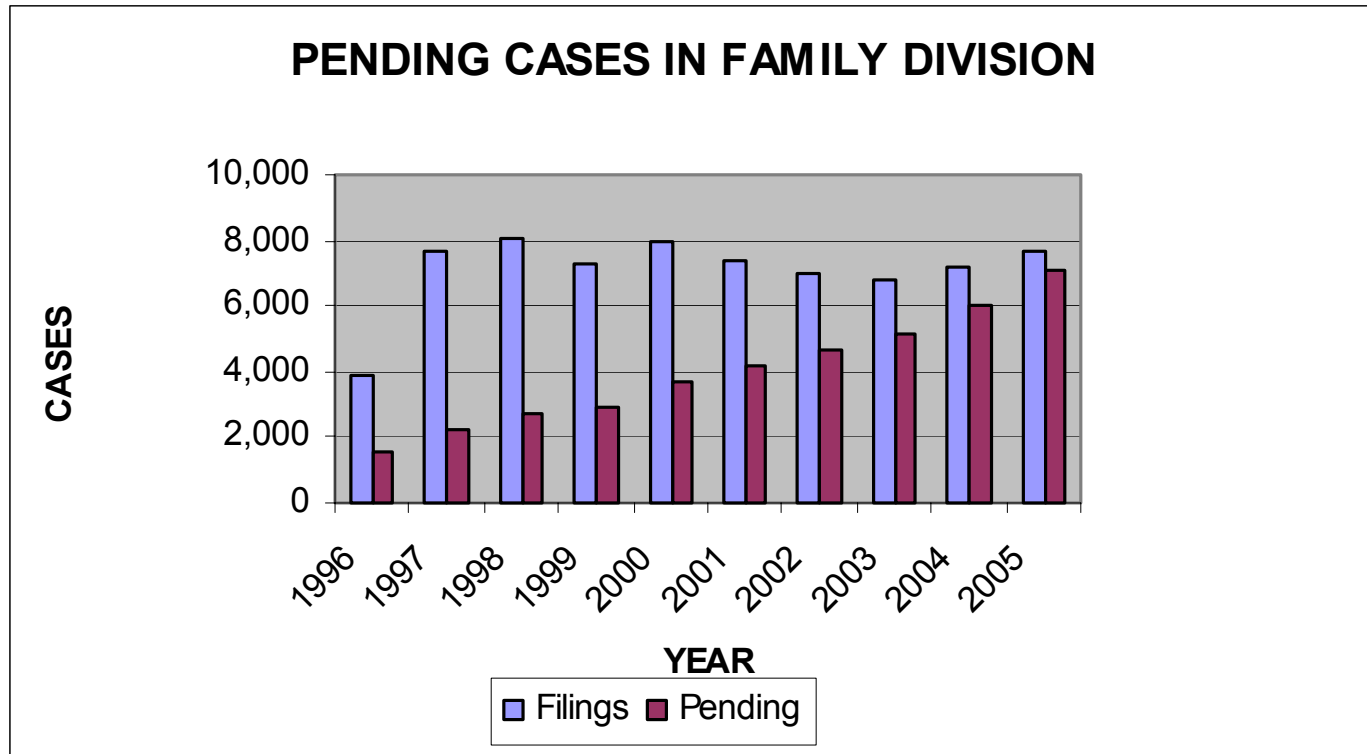
Source: National Center for State Courts, "Examining the Work of State Courts, 2005".

## The backlog of cases in District Court is growing



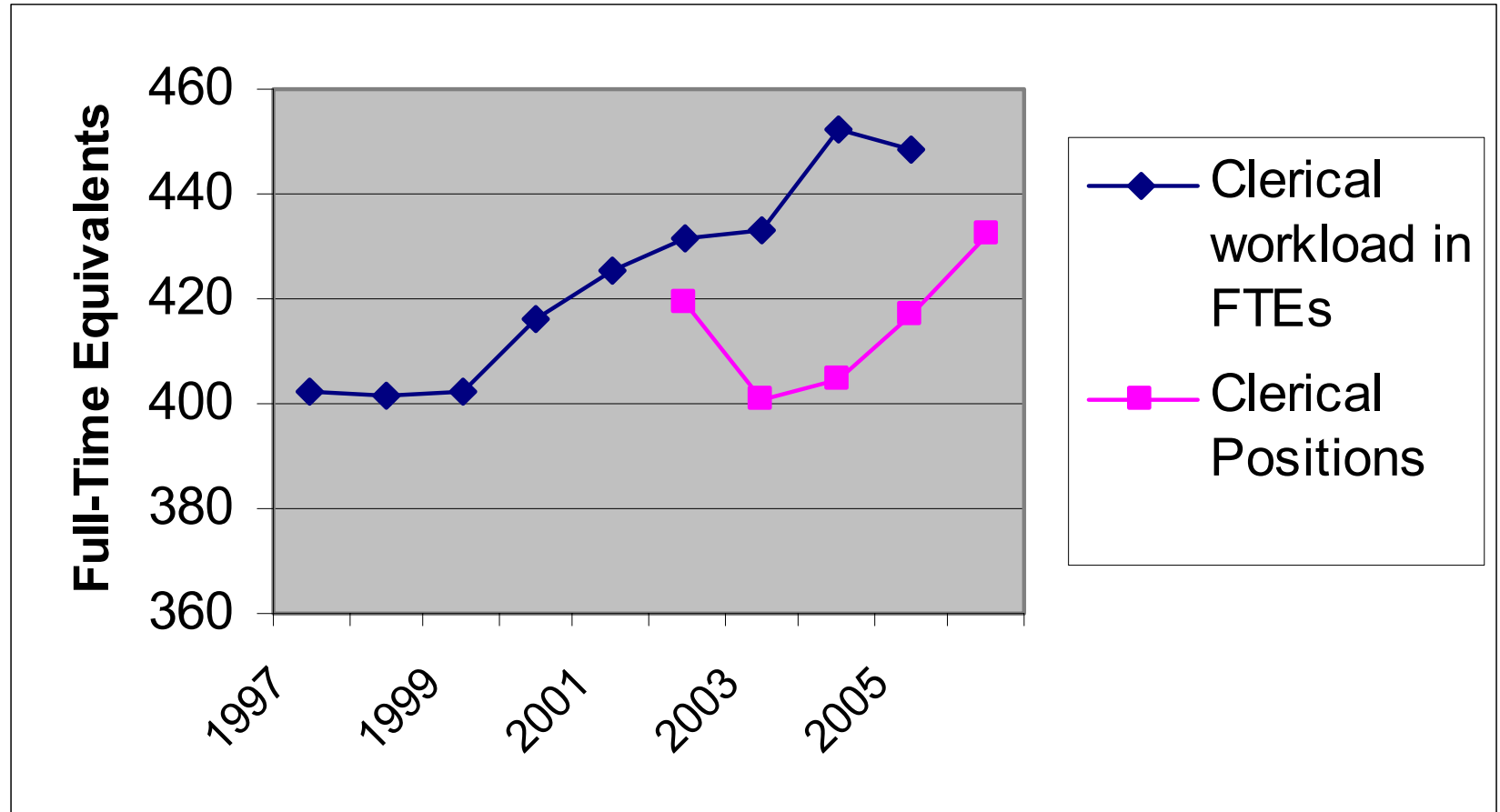
**Article 14 of the New Hampshire Constitution provides for prompt legal remedies.**

## ... and in the Family Division





## TREND IN CLERICAL WORKLOAD



## COST DRIVERS

- Judicial time on charges carrying enhanced penalties (Arsenault decision)
- Parental Rights and Responsibilities Act (RSA 461-A)
- Increase in parties without counsel (2004 data showed at least one party is pro se in 85% of civil cases in district court, 48% of civil cases in superior court, 97% in domestic violence, and 70% in domestic relations)
- A 112% increase in the number of under-age alcohol offenses between 2002 and 2006 as a result of a change to RSA 179:10

## MORE COST DRIVERS

- Use of interpreters for non-English speaking and hearing impaired population
- Increase in in-state travel associated with the opening of 8 new family division sites
- Beginning January 1, 2007, potential for a significant increase in hearings related to involuntary civil commitments of sexually violent predators.

## **COST CONTROL MEASURES**

- Increasing use of overtime, part-time, and temporary services.
- In-house production of forms
- Elimination of non-essential telephone lines
- Increasing use of Marital Masters
- Use Court Referee in certain domestic matters
- Development and promotion of mediation programs which will ultimately reduce the number of trials

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN EFFICIENCY

- Fine collection initiatives and reporting are in place in twelve courts. Cumulative collection rate is 91% by the third year.
- Supreme Court adopted rule to improve access to affordable, “unbundled” legal assistance
- Will contract with a single transcription service to provide transcripts, and transfer some administrative responsibilities to the vendor.
- Contracted with a single vendor for foreign language interpretation to lower service costs.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN EFFICIENCY, CONTINUED**

- Centralized typing of family division orders in Concord.
- Centralized many accounting functions previously performed by each court.
- Updated telephone services in several locations to reduce telephone costs & enable video conferencing.
- Piloting the use of telephonic hearings

## KEY ELEMENTS OF CHANGE BUDGET

- The change budget is 5.3% greater than the FY 2007 budget or \$3.4M.
- Employ nine Case Managers in FY 2008 and one more in FY 2009 in the trial courts. These are direct customer-support personnel that will assist parties with forms & court procedures.
- Add 10 new clerical staff in the family division to keep pace with increased workload associated with legislative changes such as RSA 461-A:4, Parenting Plans.

## INITIATIVES, CONTINUED

- Increase training budget for judicial & non-judicial staff on service and productivity. Service delivery results will be monitored for verifiable improvements.
- Seed money for the establishment of an Alternate Dispute Resolution office. The office will be self-funding. An ADR program reduces the costs of dispute resolution for the parties and the State.
- Compensation for chairpersons for Medical Screening Panels as provided under RSA 519-B:3.



## INITIATIVES, CONTINUED

- Adjust judicial branch salary matrix so that staff at the maximum step can receive five 2% increases instead of two 5% increases. The goal is to retain qualified personnel & reduce training costs.
- Convert five part-time judges to full-time over the biennium.
- Prepare for electronic case filing including extensive in-house training for IT staff, installation of public access terminals at all court sites, wiring for network access in the courtrooms.

## INITIATIVES, CONTINUED

- Add two superior court judgeships. This is supported by the judicial workload analysis. It requires a change to RSA 491:1.
- Fund 10 of the 25 vacant clerical positions in FY 2008 and 19 in FY 2009.
- Add 3 Regional Court clerks and 1 Regional Court Administrator in the Family Division.
- Increase marital master's salary to 90% of a full-time judge.

## INITIATIVES, CONTINUED

- Hire a Management Data Analyst to produce case flow, fine collection, and exception reporting.
- Hire a part-time Web support person to enhance Judicial Branch website and maintain current information.
- Purchase and install video conferencing equipment in two rural counties.
- Purchase hand held digital recording devices to record teleconferences.
- Hire a LAN support professional.

## INITIATIVES, CONTINUED

- Add two law clerks, one beginning in FY 2008 and the second in FY 2009.
- Fund Individual Performance Management initiatives including merit based employee reclassifications.
- Increase the overtime budget so that backlogs can be addressed.
- Fund OIT support services.

## STATUS OF NEW CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

- We seriously under-estimated the time & effort necessary to implement the new system
- We decided not to seek additional capital funding to accelerate deployment.
- Odyssey will allow us to change our business practices—to become more effective.
- Progress is steady, but slow.